

Message Text

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15

ACTION EA-09

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FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7149

INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY PORT MORESBY

UNCLAS CANBERRA 8521

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, PT

SUBJECT: TIMOR

1. DURING COURSE OF TELEVISION INTERVIEW PRIME MINISTER FRASER
MADE FOLLOWING COMMENTS ON TIMOR SITUATION:

2. QTE: INTERVIEWER: A PROBLEM ON OUR DOORSTEP, TIMOR.
WHAT SOLUTION DO YOU SEE TO THAT?

3. QTE. PRIME MINISTER: I WOULD HOPE THAT THERE CAN BE AN
OBSERVER MISSION FROM THE UNITED NATIONS THAT CAN PROPERLY
OVERSEE THE APPROPRIATE PROCESS OF SELF DETERMINATION. ONE OF
THE TRAGEDIES OF THIS SITUATION IS THE BREAKDOWN OF INTERNAL
ORDER IN PORTUGAL ITSELF THAT HAS LEFT PORTUGAL WITHOUT THE
WILL OR WITHOUT THE CAPACITY TO SEE THE DECOLONIZATION PROCESS
IN PORTUGUESE TIMOR PROCEED AS IT OUGHT TO HAVE PROCEEDED.
WHEN THAT SITUATION BEGAN TO DEVELOP, WHICH I THINK WAS ABOUT
14 OR 15 MONTHS AGO, IT WOULD HAVE BEEN POSSIBLE TO TAKE ONE OF
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TWO INITIATIVES, EITHER THROUGH THE UNITED NATIONS, AGAIN WITH

APPROPRIATE OBSERVER GROUPS, OR ON A REGIONAL BASIS IN COOPERATION WITH OTHER COUNTRIES TO OVERSEE THE APPROPRIATE PROCESS OF SELF DETERMINATION. NOW NEITHER OF THESE THINGS OCCURRED. NEITHER OF THESE INITIATIVES WERE TAKEN, AND A VERY DIFFICULT SITUATION RESULTED AS A RESULT OF THAT. BUT YOU WILL KNOW WE HAVE SUPPORTED VARIOUS RESOLUTIONS IN THE UNITED NATIONS AND WE HOPE THAT EFFECT CAN BE GIVEN TO THAT.

4. QTE. INTERVIEWER: ON THAT POINT, YOUR GOVERNMENT I THINK, HAS TAKEN A RATHER STRONGER LINE ON INDONESIAN ACTIVITIES IN TIMOR THAN PERHAPS THE PREVIOUS GOVERNMENT DID. WOULD YOU SAY THAT COULD CREATE SOME PROBLEMS BETWEEN CANBERRA AND JAKARTA?

5. QTE. PRIME MINISTER: I BELIEVE OUR RELATIONSHIPS WITH JAKARTA ARE VERY CLOSE. I KNOW MR. PEACOCK HAS BEEN THERE ON A NUMBER OF OCCASIONS AND PERSONALLY KNOWS A NUMBER OF THEIR LEADERS. AND SO DO I. IT IS IMPORTANT THAT RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN INDONESIA AND AUSTRALIA REMAIN CLOSE. IT IS IMPORTANT NOT ONLY FOR OURSELVES AND FOR INDONESIA, BUT FOR THE STABILITY OF THE GENERAL REGION. BUT ON THE OTHER HAND, IF THERE IS A VIEW THAT WE FEEL NEEDS TO BE PUT ON A MATTER WHICH AFFECTS OUR GENERAL RELATIONSHIPS OR THAT IMPINGES ON THE INTERESTS OF BOTH COUNTRIES, I BELIEVE THAT THE RELATIONSHIP WITH INDONESIA IS SO CLOSE THAT THEY WILL UNDERSTAND OUR POINT OF VIEW. ONE OF THE IMPORTANT THINGS BETWEEN COUNTRIES IN THE SAME PART OF THE WORLD WHO HAVE MANY FRIENDSHIPS, ATTITUDES AND INTERESTS IN COMMON, IS THAT THEY OUGHT TO BE UNDERSTOOD THAT WHEN SOME PLAIN VIEWS ARE PUT, THEY OUGHT TO BE PUT MODESTLY AND IN APPROPRIATE LANGUAGE. I THINK THAT IS WHAT WE HAVE DONE.

6. QTE. INTERVIEWER: I WONDER IF I CAN ASK YOU ONE FINAL QUESTION. ARE YOU OPTIMISTIC OR PESSIMISTIC ABOUT PROSPECTS FOR PEACE IN THIS REGION?

7. QTE. PRIME MINISTER: BASICALLY OPTIMISTIC, BUT ONLY SO LONG AS COUNTRIES ARE AWARE OF POSSIBLE DANGERS SO THAT THEIR POLICIES AND ATTITUDES CAN BE SO FRAMED THAT THOSE DANGERS DO NOT ARISE. IF WE TAKE THE ATTITUDE THAT THERE ARE NO PROBLEMS, THERE ARE NO DANGERS THAT CAN EVEN OCCUR, WELL THAT HELPS TO ESTABLISH THE CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH DANGERS AND PROBLEMS CAN

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OCCUR AND WILL OCCUR. SO IT IS A QUESTION OF BEING ABLE TO ANALYSE THE SITUATION, SEE WHERE THE DANGERS MIGHT LIE, AND HAVE A FOREIGN POLICY WHICH ENABLES US TO PREVENT THAT HAPPENING. END QTE.
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